Ganga Action Plan

3347. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) when was the Ganga Action Plan taken up for execution;

(b) what is the total expenditure incurred so far as against the Budgetted provision;

(c) by what percentage the cost of the project has escalated as on date and what is the estimated percentage by which the cost is likely to go up during the next year or so; and

(d) whether performance of Ganga Action Plan has been critically examined, if so, what are the details thereof stating the manner in which Government proposes to complete the task in accordance with the new target;

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) The Ganga Action Plan was started in June, 1986.

(b) An amount of Rs. 311.49 crore has been spent so far against the present sanctioned cost of Rs. 347.22 crores.

(c) The present escalation over the sanctioned cost is 35.5 per cent which is likely to further increase by 15 per cent by the time the project is completed.

(d) The implementation of the Ganga Action Plan is reviewed on a regular basis both by the Central Government and the State Governments. The water quality of the river Ganga is monitored regularly at 27 stations for 42 parameters. The two principal indicators of water quality namely, Bio-chemical Oxygen Demand and Dissolved oxygen are within the prescribed norms.

Commitment at RIO Conference

3348. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the working of the State Pollution Control Boards in an effort to tackle effectively the challenging responsibility emerging out of our commitment at RIO conference;

(b) if so, the details of fresh initiatives taken to strengthen the State and Central Pollution Control Boards;

(c) whether a fresh legislation or amendment to the existing legislation on Pollution and environment is proposed to be made; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) The review of the State Pollution Control Boards is a continuing exercise of the Government. Strengthening of the Boards is routinely done through funding by Government and under bilateral programmes.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Toxic and ecologically damaging pesticides

3349. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that highly toxic and ecologically damaging pesticides like Aldrin are currently in use; and

(b) what steps Government are being taken to effect immediate ban on such pesticides?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND

FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government have already phased out the use of Aldrin in India and the registration issued under the Insecticides Act, 1968 shall stand cancelled with effect from 31st December, 1993. Besides Aldrin, pesticides which have been prohibited recently are chlordane, heptachlor, tetradifon, nitrofen, nicotine sulphate (prohibited for use, manufactured for export purpose only), paraquat, phenylmercury acetate, and pentachlorophenol. Pesticides which have been restricted recently are lindane, methyl parathion, BHC and DDT.

Untreated effluents in some industrial towns

3350. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that untreated effluents have reached into underground aquifers in the industrial townships of Faridabad, Ludhiana, Pali etc. and in Varanasi, Kanpur and Lucknow and other cities;

(b) if so, whether water in these centres is becoming unfit for human consumption; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take to save and protect public health?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Studies carried out by the Central Ground Water Board have revealed that ground water in localized parts of some cities have been polluted due to seepage of untreated effluents and is not fit for human consumption, unless treated.

(c) The steps taken by the Government to save and protect public health include the following:

(i) Effluent standards have been prescribed.

(ii) Environmental guidelines have been evolved for siting and operation of industries.

(iii) Industries have been asked to comply with consent requirements of the State Pollution Control Boards.

(iv) Industries have been directed to instal necessary pollution control equipment on a time bound basis and legal action is taken against the defaulting units.

(v) 17 categories of heavily polluting industries have been identified and these industries have been asked by the State Govts. to comply with the effluent standards on a time bound basis.

(vi) A scheme has been initiated to give assistance to clusters of small scale industrial units for setting up common effluent treatment plants.

Toxins Quench Thirst in Industrial Towns

3351. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem appeared in the Indian Express dated the 29th November, 1992 captioned "Toxins Quench Thirst in Industrial Towns";

(b) whether it is a fact that industrial effluents have leaked into underground aquifers in most of the industrial towns;

(c) whether any survey has been conducted on this problem;

(d) if so, what are the details thereof;

(e) whether it is also a fact that a recent survey identified the city of Hyderabad as most vulnerable to ground water pollution;

(f) whether the Central Pollution Control Board has formulated any scheme to prevent such pollution; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) Yes, Sir.